



IN REPLY
REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Great Plains Region
Montana Area Office
P.O. Box 30137
Billings, Montana 59107-0137



MT-750
ENV-11.00

APR 04 2003

To: Interested Parties

Subject: Final Resource Management Plan/Environmental Assessment (RMP/EA) and
Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), Canyon Ferry Reservoir, Montana

Enclosed is the final RMP/EA for Canyon Ferry Reservoir in the format that you requested. The RMP/EA describes the 10-year plan for managing the land and recreation resources of Canyon Ferry Reservoir in central Montana. The RMP/EA is an integrated document containing the information required for a Resource Management Plan and information to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

The RMP portion of the document includes an inventory of the resources at Canyon Ferry Reservoir and the processes the Bureau of Reclamation will use to implement the plan in the next 10 years. The actions are designed to develop the land and recreation resources to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for the public while at the same time protecting the environment.

The EA portion of the document analyzes the environmental effects of the alternative selected as the RMP and the other two alternatives, including a no action alternative. Since all potentially significant environmental effects associated with the RMP were identified, evaluated, and resolved or mitigated, a FONSI was signed by the Montana Area Office Area Manager and is included at the beginning of the document.

The RMP/EA was prepared using public input from scoping meetings, public information meetings, public hearings and review of two draft documents. Reclamation received written review and public hearing comments on the April 2002, Second Public Draft. Comments requiring a response and/or a document revision are summarized with Reclamation's responses in Appendix A of the enclosed RMP/EA.

The RMP/EA provides guidelines for managing the land and recreation resources by:

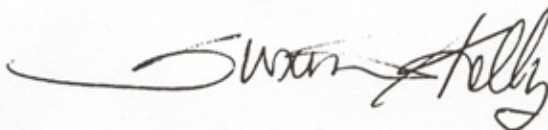
- presenting the preferred alternative: "Natural Resource Enhancement with Moderate Recreation Development" for Canyon Ferry Reservoir.

- outlining how Reclamation will continue to use public involvement to help guide resource management at Canyon Ferry Reservoir including, but not limited to: the working group, the commercial services plan and the two user surveys.
- describing other entities Reclamation will work with to manage the resources at Canyon Ferry Reservoir including, but not limited to, the concessionaires, Broadwater and Lewis and Clark Counties law enforcement and fire departments, local volunteer fire departments, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Fire Control, homeowners and cabin associations, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, adjacent land owners, and other Federal agencies.
- pursuing condition assessments of all the recreation facilities and keeping health and safety a priority in managing land and recreation resources at Canyon Ferry Reservoir.
- clarifying that all current commercial operations (marinas) contracts will be competitively reissued as they expire and that Reclamation will work with Broadwater County to determine the extent of a new commercial operation at the Silos Recreation Area.

We appreciate your interest in and input to this plan. We look forward to providing a safe and pleasant recreation experience for all the visitors at Canyon Ferry Reservoir. We will be working with interested individuals, entities and organizations through the working group as outlined in the RMP/EA.

If you have questions, please contact Paul Backlund at 406-475-3923, via e-mail at pbacklund@gp.usbr.gov or in writing at 7661 Canyon Ferry Road, Helena, Montana, 59602.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Kelly", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Susan J. Kelly
Area Manager

Enclosure